

CHAPTER 2

ELECTIONS

Section 201. Voter Registration

- a) Residents of Garrett Park who meet the criteria established in Sections 78-20 and 78-22 of the Charter are eligible to be registered to vote in all Town of Garrett Park elections.
- b) Following procedures adopted by the election judges consistent with section 78-22 of the Charter, Election Judges and the Town Manager are authorized to register qualified persons to vote.
- c) It is the policy of the Town that all eligible voters shall be provided with an opportunity to vote. There shall be provision for the registration of eligible residents at the election.
- d) Registration of voters shall take place any time the Town office or the polls are open as well as other times or places that the election judges may designate.
- e) The Town Manager shall maintain a roll of registered voters which includes all qualified voters registered with Montgomery County as well as those registered only with the Town. For use for Town elections, the roll shall be updated as close to the day of elections as Montgomery County will allow.
- f) Copies of the registration rolls are public information and may be made available to individuals requesting them.
- g) Poll books or equivalent electronic records being used by poll workers to manage the voting process shall be confidential until the polls are closed and vote counting is completed.
- h) Copies of the poll books are public information and may be made available to individuals requesting them at the completion of vote counting and certification of the results.

Section 202. Nominations

- a) Nominations for elective office shall be made at a meeting determined by the Town Council in consultation with the Election Judges and consistent with provisions of the Charter, and may be held by the Council, by a town-recognized organization such as the Citizens Association, or in another manner, time, and place determined by the Council to be fair, open, and accessible.

- b) All persons nominated and running for elective office must file a financial disclosure as provided in Section 112.

Section 203. Voting at the Polling Place

- a) The polls shall be open on election day at a time or times that allow all residents the opportunity to vote including early hours before voters leave for work, late hours for voters after returning from work, and at appropriate times throughout the day to accommodate all other voters.
- b) The election, its location, and the hours that the polls are open shall be advertised in such a way that residents of the Town are likely to be aware of the event and their ability to vote. The criteria for, and availability of, registration and absentee voting shall also be disseminated.
- c) The polling place shall be easily accessible by all voters.
- d) The location of the voting and the arrangement of checking in and casting ballots shall insure the privacy of those voting. The arrangements shall provide sufficient barriers to prevent others in the area from hearing conversations between the voters and election officials and prevent others from observing the votes being cast.
- e) Photography or recording of election activities is prohibited, and, except for Election Judges, the use of phones or other electronic devices by those in the vicinity of the voting to communicate to others beyond the voting area is prohibited.
- f) Any attempts to influence or intimidate voters at the polling place are prohibited.
- g) No person shall canvass, electioneer, solicit votes or post any campaign material in any polling place or within a fifty (50) foot radius from the entrance and exit of the building closest to that part of the building where ballots are cast.
- h) The Election Judges have full power to determine whether any of the provisions in this section have been violated and to order the expulsion of those persons in violation.
- i) At least one Election Judge shall be present to supervise the voting process whenever the polls are open. The Chief Election Judge shall either be present or be available on call to deal with any issues.

Section 204. Ballots

Candidates shall be listed on ballots in alphabetical order and shall not be identified as to incumbency or political party affiliation.

Section 205. Absentee Voting

- a) Any registered voter may vote as an absentee.
- b) Absentee ballots shall be prepared and be available as soon as possible after the slate of candidates for election has been determined and wording for other issues to be included on the ballot has been completed, but in no case shall they be made available later than 14 days prior to the election.
- c) After they are prepared, absentee ballots shall be available at any time that the Town Office or the polls are open.
- d) A registered voter desiring to vote as an absentee may request an absentee ballot beginning 60 days preceding an election.
- e) The absentee voting process shall be designed so as to protect the privacy of the voter, assuring that the identification of the voter is separated from the vote cast.
- f) The absentee voting process shall be designed to assure that the person who requested the ballot is the one who submitted the ballot.
- g) Absentee ballots shall be made available and shall be accepted up to the time of the closing of polls on election day.
- h) The Election Judges shall assure that no person can vote both absentee and in person.
- i) The Election Judges shall determine the authenticity of absentee ballots and shall count the valid ballots together with those cast in person at the polls.

Section 206. Poll Watchers

- a) Any registered voter in the Town of Garrett Park may be a poll watcher.

- b) Poll Watchers may observe the voting process or the vote count process within the location where such process is being conducted. Poll Watchers must declare themselves to the Election Judges upon arrival. The Election Judges will determine where the Poll Watcher must stay while observing.
- c) Poll Watchers may not interfere with the voting process except to challenge a voter's qualifications. Such challenge may only be made to an Election Judge and the decision of the Election Judge on the challenge is final.
- d) Poll Watchers may observe the vote count, but conversations, questions, or other activities that interfere with or disrupt the vote counting process are prohibited. During the vote count, a Poll Watcher may not challenge or attempt to challenge any part of the process. A Poll Watcher may lodge a written complaint about the vote count with the Chief Election Judge after the completion of the count.

Section 112. Financial Disclosure Statement

All elected Town officials, all candidate for election to Town Offices and all Town staff shall file a financial disclosure statement with the Town annually, not later than 21 days prior to the general Town election. Failure to comply with the provisions of this Section may, in the case of elected officials or the Town staff, be cause for the Town Council to remove the offender from office. In the case of candidates for office, failure to comply with the provisions of this Section shall result in the removal of their names from the election ballot

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